

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Weekly Bulletin



GEORGE E. EBRIGHT, M. D.
PRESIDENT

FRED F. GUNDRUM, M. D.
VICE PRESIDENT

A. J. SCOTT, JR., M. D.

EDWARD F. GLASER, M. D.

ADELAIDE BROWN, M. D.

ROBERT A. PEERS, M. D.

WALTER M. DICKIE, M. D.
SECRETARY AND EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Entered as second-class matter February 21, 1922, at the post office at Sacramento, California, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917.

Vol. IV, No. 33

SEPTEMBER 26, 1925.

GUY P. JONES
EDITOR

Bacterial Rat Exterminators Banned.

The following resolution, forbidding the exposure for sale or sale of bacterial rat exterminators in California was adopted by the California State Board of Health, August 15, 1925:

Whereas, Several alleged rat exterminators, the efficiency of which depends upon the use of cultures of bacteria which may contaminate human food supplies, have been placed upon the market and advertised for sale in California, and

Whereas, Experiments conducted by the Consulting Bacteriologist of the California State Board of Health, have failed to demonstrate any great exterminating efficiency in these products, but have determined that their use may lead to the production of a chronic carrier state in rodents with bacteria which are known to cause human food poisoning, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the California State Board of Health forbids the sale or exposure for sale of this type of alleged rat exterminator within the State of California.

The objection to these so-called exterminators lies in the fact that they are uncertain in their action, owing to rapid loss of virulence and, more important, they may be of distinct detrimental value in causing diseases that may be harmful to man. While these products are supposed to be harmless to human beings, it is a fact that the bacteria used, belong to the food poisoning group of bacilli and may at any time develop a pathogenic power for man.

Rats may become carriers of such organisms in the same way that human beings become typhoid carriers. When such a possibility develops, the chance for human infection is extended greatly. These so-called biological rat exterminators are not used by organizations that have had vast experience in the work of rat eradication. Experts in this sort of work advise strongly against the use of such products.



Poliomyelitis At Low Stage.

Reference to the morbidity tables published on the last page of this issue of the WEEKLY BULLETIN, indicate that poliomyelitis is less prevalent in California than it has been for many weeks. Whether the usual increase will appear during October, remains to be seen. It is believed that the intensive efforts of health officers, physicians and public health nurses to check the spread of the disease may be a factor in the reduced prevalence.



Public Health Nursing Examination In December.

The California State Board of Health will hold an examination for Public Health Nursing Certificate on Saturday, December 12, 1925, at Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Applications are obtainable at the offices of the Board at Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco.

Applications must be filed with the Board not later than November 20th.

A Less Sober View Of Death.

Sometimes a serio-comic treatment of a matter of vital importance is more convincing than a profound method might be. Dr. Thurman B. Rice, Director of the Bacteriological Laboratory of the Indiana State Board of Health, has chosen in an article entitled "Postponing Our Own Funerals," published in the Monthly Bulletin of the Indiana State Board of Health, to regard death humorously. He writes:

"Funerals as a rule are cheerless occasions. Particularly is this true of one's own funeral. Personally, I am quite willing to postpone the event indefinitely. Since I saw a photoplay reproduction of Dante's Inferno a few weeks ago I am more in favor of it than ever. After all, this is a fine old world and I'd like to stick around. Of course I want to be well, free of pain, able to work and play, and be somebody. I am not wanting to be one of those individuals who dies slowly at about the age of fifty and then has a funeral postponed for twenty or thirty years. After a person ceases to amount to anything, three days is enough for him to serve as the centerpiece of the floral display.

How can we postpone the evil day when we drop by the side of the road? How can we remain not merely alive, but efficient, happy, attractive, interesting and interested? That if you please, is my major occupation—I mean it should be. I am in business for my health—except when I forget and do as I did the other day. Would you believe it? I sent for the undertaker the other day. I asked him to come two weeks sooner than he was due, and he eagerly enough promised not to disappoint me. Oh he'll not forget it, don't worry. I forgot that day that Nature is an accurate bookkeeper and so I made a big entry on the debit side. Fool! But much as we all like to live we are every mother's son of us committing suicide every day, and some of these days we are going to be sorry for it.

Three score and ten. Well so far as I am concerned that's too short. It is like a one week summer vacation when you had planned for two weeks. I admire the group of young men all over eighty, who organized the Centenarian's Club of Los Angeles. Each solemnly swore when he took the oath of the order that he would live to be one hundred years old. If he died before that time there was a very severe penalty attached. The penalty

was death and expulsion from active membership in the club. The average length of life has been so rapidly increasing in recent years that it will not be long until we must revise this three-score-and-ten idea. During the Dark Ages the average length of life was nineteen years, in 1800 it was thirty-three, in 1855 it was forty, and in 1920 it was 58. How long should man live if he gets the right start and then takes care of himself? Suppose we look into the life of other animals. Other mammals live about five times as long as it takes them to become mature as determined by the ossification of their bones. For instance:

A dog is mature at about 2 years and is old at 10 years.

A cow is mature at about 3 years and is old at 15 years.

A horse is mature at about 5 years and is old at 25 years.

A man is mature at about 25 and at the same rate should live to be ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE years old.

All in favor of this new arrangement signify their assent by standing. The vote is unanimous except for a few who are too near dead to stand on their feet. So let's strike out for the new goal. This seventy years plan cramps one so. He has barely gotten his family raised by that time.

And we're on our way. Bobbed-haired grandma is younger than her mother was at twenty. My father has often told me, though he could remember his mother when she was thirty-eight, he could not remember when she was not known as "Old Aunt Rhoda." I remember the same dear old lady as a jolly and vivacious companion at eighty-eight. The smooth-faced young man of today is aghast when he finds that the picture of his grandfather with a full beard was taken at his own age. Imagine a modern youth of nineteen writing "Thanatopsis." He is more interested in the sport page, and I believe he is right. Oh, the solemn, pained and world-weary expression on those faces peering out of the past, a la daguerreotype. No wonder they died young. They died in self defense. Many people think that folks lived longer in the old days than they do now. It isn't true. The time just seemed longer.

But how do we get about putting a boycott on the undertaker? Well it's something like religion. Easy to preach and hard to practice. But like religion it is very much worth while, and even if the effort doesn't actually bring us to the Promised Land it will at least greatly benefit our bodies as will its counterpart

benefit our souls. Come to think of it, is not the practice of the principles of health very nearly a proper part of our Christian religion? We are told at church that we should obey the laws of God. But are not the laws covering proper care of our bodies the laws of God?

Kermit Roosevelt is said to have remarked on one occasion, 'The only trouble with Dad is that when he goes to a funeral he wants to be the corpse.' Well I guess we understand what the boy meant, and it is likely that his Dad would have denied any desire to fulfill the wish in the literal sense. These days we are planning our lives rather than planning our funerals as used to be a common custom. Why, I knew a woman once who had all the songs picked out, the text for the minister's sermon, the clothes she wanted to wear on the occasion and all of the other gruesome details. Worse than that even all her neighbors, friends and relatives had heard the plans over and over. I imagine they gave a sigh of relief when the actual funeral was all over and no mistake made. One likes to see things through as planned you know.

Well let's put it off as long as possible and think about it only when seeking means of forestalling it. After all I suppose the best preparation for the next world is to live properly in this."



Nation Needs Better Morbidity Reporting.

"For a number of years, the federal government through its agency, the Public Health Service, has insisted on obtaining from state and local health authorities, reports of communicable diseases, with very little share in the expense of collecting these data," is the statement of the Surgeon General.

"State health officers are demanding better reports of preventable diseases. At the last conference of the state health officers with the Surgeon General, they proposed and unanimously adopted a resolution, asking that the Surgeon General take steps to create a registration area for morbidity reports comparable to the registration areas of the Census Bureau for births and deaths.

The number of insane and feeble-minded, many of whom are in this condition as a result of preventable diseases, is constantly increasing and adding to the burdens of the taxpayer.

During the calendar year 1922, the last for which data are available, there were 78,070 persons cared for in almshouses and 348,928 in homes, day nurseries and

similar institutions. In addition to these, there were in hospitals and other institutions for the care of the insane and feeble-minded and epileptics a total of 348,174 persons. Records show that more than 400,000 persons go out from our state and federal penitentiaries annually; many of those of our dependent classes as well as many of those in penal institutions are suffering from preventable diseases which in some measure are factors in their dependency or delinquency.

For several years past, an effort has been made to obtain appropriations for improving the accuracy and completeness of reports of diseases of man but without success. An estimate of \$4,000 for this work was approved by the Bureau of the Budget for the fiscal year 1925, but this appropriation was not approved by congress. A like estimate was submitted for 1926 but this also failed.

The last congress ratified an international Pan-American sanitary code or treaty approved by the President, providing that each signatory power thereto, shall collect and publish statistics of communicable and preventable diseases, and this treaty has already been ratified by a number of Latin American republics and it is believed will soon be ratified by practically all of them.

It is of the utmost importance that provision be made for the better collection of morbidity statistics, including those diseases which play such an important part in the production of insanity and feeble-mindedness."



"You can't beat the game of health, and there's no use trying. In the long run you can't graft on your physical reserve force and get away with it. Sooner or later you will have to pay. The debt may hang fire for years or even longer, but in the end nature will demand its whole pay with interest. Each one of us know people who are paying the debt in broken health. How often you've heard someone remark, 'I have tried this and that doctor, but don't seem to get any help.' Then there are others who have spent great sums in hospitals for relief. WHY? Because they are paying the debt that nature demands for the years of neglect in health protection. Don't wait until you are all run down. It is much wiser and less expensive to employ your doctor at regular periods to tell you what to do to keep well and it is much more comfortable. 'Some of us lose our health in acquiring wealth, then in turn lose our wealth in trying to get back our health.' Health is worth much more than dollars. Our bodies are machines. The farmer who keeps his farm tools in order secures the best results. The manufacturer who keeps his machinery in order produces the most and best goods. The auto owner who keeps his car in good repair gets the best results and most enjoyment. Most of us do all these things and ignorantly neglect ourselves.

Begin with your children—have them overhauled and physical defects repaired."

MORBIDITY.***Diphtheria.**

80 cases of diphtheria have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 19, San Francisco 13, Oakland 8, Los Angeles County 11, Santa Rosa 1, Visalia 3, Tulare County 1, San Diego 3, Sonoma County 1, Stockton 1, San Jose 1, Modesto 1, Yreka 1, Berkeley 2, Santa Barbara 2, Woodland 1, Merced County 2, Glendale 1, Burbank 1, Long Beach 1, Orange 1, Pittsburg 1, Kern County 1, Watts 1, Corona 2.

Measles.

13 cases of measles have been reported, as follows: Berkeley 1, Fresno 2, Sacramento 2, Los Angeles 1, San Jose 1, Fullerton 1, San Francisco 1, Santa Clara County 1, Long Beach 2, San Diego 1.

Scarlet Fever.

38 cases of scarlet fever have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 8, Los Angeles County 5, Oakland 3, San Francisco 3, Santa Ana 1, San Jose 2, Fresno County 1, Santa Clara County 1, Sacramento 1, Sonoma County 1, Fresno 1, Stockton 2, Manteca 1, Tracy 1, Lodi 1, Berkeley 2, San Diego 2, Imperial County 1, Kern County 1.

Smallpox.

18 cases of smallpox have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 10, San Luis Obispo County 1, Siskiyou County 1, Long Beach 1, Berkeley 1, San Diego County 1, Oakland 1, Redding 1, San Francisco 1.

Typhoid Fever.

18 cases of typhoid fever have been reported, as follows: Santa Ana 1, Los Angeles County

1, Oroville 1, San Diego County 1, Los Angeles 1, Lodi 1, Calaveras County 1, Yreka 1, Imperial County 1, San Jose 1, San Bernardino 1, Eldorado County 1, Fresno County 1, San Francisco 3, Los Angeles County 1, California 1.

Whooping Cough.

71 cases of whooping cough have been reported, as follows: Los Angeles 15, Berkeley 15, San Francisco 11, San Diego 8, Oakland 3, San Luis Obispo County 1, San Benito County 2, Pasadena 3, Santa Ana 1, Alameda 4, Palo Alto 1, Riverside 1, Glendale 1, Santa Barbara 3, Los Angeles County 2.

Poliomyelitis.

19 cases of poliomyelitis have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 2, Oakland 2, Los Angeles 3, Tulare County 1, Fresno County 1, Fresno 1, San Diego 3, Hermosa 1, Stockton 1, Lodi 1, Alhambra 1, Chico 1, Madera 1.

Epidemic Meningitis.

One case of epidemic meningitis has been reported from Santa Barbara.

Leprosy.

Two cases of leprosy have been reported: Sacramento 1 and Los Angeles County 1.

Epidemic Encephalitis.

Two cases of epidemic encephalitis have been reported, as follows: San Francisco 1, Oakland 1.

*From reports received on September 21st and 22d for week ending September 19th.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE REPORTS.

	1925				1924			
	Week ending			Reports for week ending Sept. 19 received by Sept. 22	Week ending			Reports for week ending Sept. 20 received by Sept. 23
	Aug. 29	Sept. 5	Sept. 12		Aug. 30	Sept. 6	Sept. 13	
Anthrax.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chickenpox.....	38	27	22	35	26	23	31	43
Diphtheria.....	61	62	56	80	156	119	122	119
Dysentery (Bacillary).....	1	2	4	2	19	0	1	0
Epidemic Encephalitis.....	1	1	2	2	5	1	3	2
Epidemic Meningitis.....	2	2	5	1	2	1	1	1
Gonorrhoea.....	105	115	85	294	69	62	117	98
Influenza.....	8	2	5	12	8	3	6	5
Leprosy.....	1	0	1	2	1	0	0	1
Malaria.....	4	7	5	2	0	1	4	5
Measles.....	14	14	12	13	38	17	6	12
Mumps.....	39	47	35	63	16	31	24	33
Pneumonia (lobar).....	20	26	55	14	101	27	19	25
Poliomyelitis.....	43	28	19	19	6	2	5	3
Scarlet Fever.....	41	33	34	38	37	55	44	56
Smallpox.....	14	24	14	18	49	57	52	59
Syphilis.....	81	247	127	219	74	99	184	116
Tuberculosis.....	186	160	125	153	156	95	137	164
Typhoid Fever.....	32	36	21	18	27	16	29	20
Whooping Cough.....	94	79	90	71	74	37	57	47
Totals.....	785	912	717	1056	864	646	842	809

CALIFORNIA STATE PRINTING OFFICE